THE COMMONWEAL

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STAR-SPANGLED EUROPE

STATISTICS, it has been often remarked, can prove anything that a skilled manipulator wants them to prove. On the other hand, there is a sheer force in figures, impressively arrayed, that is seldom bettered by arguments drawn from them. Their repercussion, if one may be permitted the use of an abused word, is very far-reaching. An instance is the report just issued by the Department of Commerce, over the signature of Secretary Hoover, upon the volume with which American money is being carried abroad in the wallets of eastward tourists year by year, and the extent to which American investors are staking the continued recovery of Europe. No amount of comment, however skilfully applied, will overtake the force of the statement that $761,000,000 was spent in Europe during the past twelve months by travelers from the United States on business and pleasure; that American underwriters floated $1,319,000,000 in foreign securities; or that American foreign investments of other kinds reached the figure of $333,000,000. The figures leave out of consideration the statistics of travel and expenditures in neighboring Canada, which are merely reported to have "broken all records." Even without them, the impression is strengthened that we live in an era of intensive concern with Europe, both practical and sentimental, which would have surprised our ancestors of the "mauve decade," and that what Mr. Hoover picturesquely styles the "invisible items" of international traffic can no longer be left out of consideration when striking a balance sheet of our relations with the older world.

There is a great deal, of course, that the Department's report neither tells nor pretends to tell. The forces that bring nations together or drive them further apart are not to be expressed in numerical terms. Travel is a very old affair and has not proved a panacea against misunderstanding between nations. Theoretically, as steamship agents and other interested parties are never tired of telling us, travel broadens the mind. Actually, as the old Roman observed in days when it was less general, its effect may be to reinforce prejudices already acquired. "Coelum non animam mutant qui trans mare currunt." Nevertheless, in the figures quoted by Secretary Hoover, there is an item that puts this annual migration of our people on a footing different from anything that the past affords as a comparison. "During the year," we are told, "nearly 371,000 American citizens made journeys in non-contiguous lands." When such proportions are reached, it is plain that the urge to see other lands and to make visual encounter with cities and

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peoples as yet known only through the written word, is extending not only widely over but deeply into the mass of our citizenry.

Strangely enough, the significance of this annual migration is coming home far more vividly in the countries that benefit by it than in the country which sends it forth year by year. One might even say that what has come to be known as the "American invasion" has passed the stage where it appealed to the European imagination and has reached a point where it is getting slightly upon European nerves. It is realized that a process so continuous and so intense cannot take place without bringing profound changes in its train. No country that entertains a third of a million strangers annually can hope to attract the golden harvest by offering them only home-grown customs and usages. There need not even be a conscious demand for change on the part of the visitor to bring it about. Too many thousands of people are vitally concerned in catering to the stranger not to seek to remold their own national scheme of things a little nearer to what they conceive to be his heart's desire. In this case, as everywhere, it is the average that rules and works its will. The American traveler of the older school may resent the process and shudder at seeing his pet boulevard broken into for the erection of a mammoth hotel indistinguishable, both inside and out, from structures that rear their bulk upon Fifth and Madison Avenues. But the concerted endeavor to make the less sophisticated tourist feel at home from home recks nothing of these susceptibilities. The day, envisaged by Pierre Loti in one of his many moments of depression, when the world will have been standardized to an extent that makes travel a futile gesture may still be distant. But a premonition of it is finding its way into too much cleverly and plausibly written comment from the hands of European and American authors alike, not to show that it is beginning to be an abiding concern abroad.

In an article in the current issue of Harper's magazine entitled The Outlook for American Culture, Mr. Aldous Huxley steels his cultured mind, with a philosophy that is evidently not achieved without some effort, to the prospect of an Americanized globe. "The future of America," he tells us, "is the future of the world. Material circumstances are driving all nations along the path in which America is going. Living in the contemporary environment, which is everywhere becoming more and more American, men feel a psychological compulsion to go the American way. . . . Speculating on the American future, we are speculating on the future of civilized man."

Mr. Huxley's speculations, it need scarcely be said, do not stop at the material changes taking place in Europe—indeed, hardly more use is made of them than as a text for deeper readjustments that are coming in the spiritual sphere. Machinery, he finds, has made leisure possible and reduced drudgery. The drudgery incidental to making the machinery, he, in common with other social prophets, leaves conveniently out of his purview. Leisure has made possible "that higher life whose beauty is the theme of all the homilies of all the teachers of the world," including, one must suppose, the author of Antic Hay. But it is not taken advantage of by those Americans to whom "contemporary urban life, with its jazz bands, its negroid dancing, its movies, theatres, football matches, newspapers, and the like" is the ideal. Meanwhile, "nothing is more remarkable than the recent American tendency to exalt the ordinary man, occupied with ordinary worldly affairs, at the expense of the exceptional man who takes no interest in such affairs." The English writer sees no other hope for the world, as American prosperity and leisure inevitably infects it, with a corresponding depression in spiritual values, than salvation achieved through a resolute reorganization of its peoples "officially divided up into different psychological types."

It is only because Mr. Huxley's sad prophecy (saddest, to our mind, in a conclusion that is meant to convey hope) is typical of many that result from a first encounter with the American scene and the American effort, that it is worth considering. Some of the statements are not even half-truths. The "American tendency to exalt the ordinary man" might be put to the test by the comparative ease with which Mr. Huxley could recall the names of, shall we say, six prominent engineers whom he may have heard mentioned during his sojourn in this country, as against six authors whose names it is impossible to escape in any ordinary after-dinner conversation, among the literary and unliterary alike. The "leisure" which he regrets seeing so misused, is not leisure in any true sense of the word. It is at best an interval between long periods of gruelling and soul-deadening mechanical work, and the fact that a higher ratio of wages permits it to be employed under outer aspects which reproduce the life of a higher social category in Europe should not blind the philosopher to its real insignificance in computing the comparative culture of two civilizations.

Prosperity is a great responsibility, but we humbly submit that the signs in America of that responsibility being generally abused or neglected are most palpable to those who, whether they admit it or not, are more offended by its general diffusion among quite ordinary people than encouraged by the general alleviations it has brought to life. Americanization on a wholesale scale may be ahead of the world, though we incline to doubt it. But it will only turn to the undoing of those countries which grasp at the meaner values which none more than thinking Americans deplore, and miss the implications still contained in the ideal with which this country started its corporate existence, "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness." Meanwhile much good can come out of an interchange of ideas and reactions, and Secretary Hoover's statistics give a real and helpful idea of the impressive scale on which it is proceeding in our restless day.

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THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEK BY WEEK

DISARMAMENT has made no progress; the pacification of industrial warfare has. Although the trade treaty signed by France and Germany at the end of a long series of negotiations and conferences will probably not be celebrated by parades down the more fashionable boulevards, it may mean more to thousands of citizens than a martial victory could. No sooner had the war ended than serious economists throughout Europe realized that peace could not be maintained if incessant commercial antagonism were suffered to continue, and that the resources of the continent would not suffice to sustain the level of living unless some intelligent notice were taken of the distribution of those resources. Even in the days when bitterness was most intense, some did not hesitate to say that from an economic point of view France and Germany are complementary. The first is the greatest of all agricultural and artistic nations; the second has proved beyond any doubt its genius in reproductive and inventive industry. There is no reason why either should refuse to recognize the value of the other, or to reckon with conditions fixed by geography and historical development. Though the present treaty is only a step in the right direction, it can now be followed up with other sensible efforts to end European economic chaos. The motto of Cobden, "Retrenchment, free trade and peace," needs to be repeated over and over again by statesmen as well as pamphleteers.

MR. JOSEPH DE COURCY, the New York Times correspondent, never wrote a more interesting story in his life than the account of how he came to be expelled from Mexico by order of Colonel Tejada, minister of the Department of the Interior. This same fire-eating Tejada has long since been known as the power behind the Calles throne—a good manipulator of funds, and a still better hater of gringos and Catholics. At any rate his anger at the despatches which Mr. De Courcy sent regarding depredations upon the United States embassy in Mexico City and similar manifestations of "progress," induced him to order the newspaperman's arrest and imprisonment in a dirty jail. There he was held incommunicado until Mr. Lane, First Secretary of the embassy, ignoring a score of solemn lies, forced his way into the prison. What followed was sudden separation from wife and children, deportation and censorship. "A strict censorship, which is airtight for all countries except Nicaragua," says Mr. De Courcy, "is now in force, and no real information on conditions in Mexico is permitted to be sent either by wire or by mail." An interesting situation in a country which some six months ago was the greatest source of propaganda in the whole of the comment-absorbing western hemisphere.

EVENTS in plenty indicate, as does this deportation, that the existing Mexican government is going to make a hard and terroristic fight to win the next election. One of its trump cards seems to be capitalization of feeling against the United States. Tejada himself issued a circular recommending a boycott of goods from across the Rio Grande, apparently for no other purpose than to stir the embers of fanaticism to life. Another trump card is the plain threat of General Obregon to use military force if necessary: "If the reactionaries again desire the shedding of blood, we will march again to sacrifice." It remains to be seen whether such raw expedients of tyranny, for many gullible recommendations of which various United States liberals must now be ashamed, can triumph over the will of a people and the irresistible march of events. A government verging on bankruptcy, corrupt to the core and stripped of credit with other nations; an industry slowly collapsing under the weight of inefficiency and dishonest management; natural resources utilized by feebly gesticulating private greed; an educational system withered because the money to pay salaries is not forthcoming; a grim religious persecution discredited by all who still retain a sense of what liberty means—these are not the foundations of a government, but the stages of a catastrophic downfall which (let us not forget) will mean the desolation of millions of common citizens.

CONCERNING Judge Elbert Gary, whose death at an advanced age has been very recently mourned, nearly all shades of opinion will agree that he went as far toward making modern American business honest and serviceable as it is possible to go from a strictly business-man point of view. To a steel industry which

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had struggled into a more or less shapeless maturity during formative periods of discovery and exploitation, and which remained badly disfigured by competition of the old low-hitting sort, he brought unity based squarely upon conformity with law and upon the confidence of stockholders. Under his care the United States Steel Corporation became something which most citizens of the same age as Judge Gary never expected to see—a model trust. The tasks surmounted were unusually difficult. Welding together the scattered portions of the business, so that one plan governed the production of ore, the systems of transportation and the milling of the product, was in itself a stupendous enterprise that may well be termed a magnificent adventure. Yet this was, perhaps, a much less significant achievement than the building up of new cities to house the men upon whose brawn the success of the work depended. Such towns as Gary, Mahoning and Homestead have never been pleasant places to contemplate, but they do represent a new type of industrial community which is obviously superior in many ways to the old New England, or the modern southern, factory town.

TOWARD the people who dwelt under the shadow of his corporation, Judge Gary's attitude was, of course, that of the shrewd financier. He believed that working men existed to give their services to the business at figures which that business itself thought fair and consonant with sound financial organization. Opposed as he was to collective bargaining and to all the more advanced expressions of industrial democracy, he cannot, of course, be termed a protagonist of labor's point of view. He did not understand it and very deeply distrusted it. Yet he was not of the brood of mean little prigs who talk about "humanistic investments." Giving generously of his time and money to enterprises calculated to better the lives of workers' families, he was guided by an earnest desire to make the new communities decent places to live in—places where typically American "opportunity" would form part of the landscape. During his time something actually like prosperity and humanity has tinged the rude assemblages of hovels which first clustered around the mills and the pits. If not everything that justice calls for has been accomplished, it is well to remember that this justice is not born on two feet, but must be achieved gradually above solid foundations. That Judge Gary took part in this gradual development is his well-deserved epitaph.

MR. COOLIDGE made a speech to 10,000 assembled Sioux Indians, thus enjoying an experience which has come to no other President. For now all the red men, descendants of tribes whose last battles with the pale-face were ended years ago, are citizens of the republic and as such potential candidates for the office of chief executive. It was sensibly pointed out to them that the problem of Indian welfare is an exceedingly complicated one, owing to the diversity of tribes and languages, the unwillingness of many to abandon traditional habits, and the great intricacy of legislation which has grown up around Indian affairs. The President paid a compliment to the work of Indian missionaries, which took the form of an appendage to these characteristically American remarks: "I am told that only a comparatively few years ago it was difficult to induce Indian parents to send their children to school, but that today the reverse is the rule and fathers and mothers of our Indian youth have come to realize the value of an education and the need of schooling." Doubtless this dawning of the light will develop into that brilliant full noon when all little Indians will sing the praises of the sixth grade. One hopes their progress in learning will not involve the total loss of their own peculiar traditions and traits. Sorrow must follow the day when the last of the roaming warriors surrenders completely to the white man, and exchanges the individuality of an oriental mind for an imitation twentieth century outlook. By comparison one notes how easy it has been to engraft the faith of Christ upon this primitive nomadic civilization without destroying its native virtues; and one remembers that almost the only native Catholic saint is a none too learned Indian maid.

TALLEYRAND'S famous dictum that it mattered less who made the laws for a nation than who made its songs, seems to have been taken to heart by lovers of world peace in Paris and elsewhere. They have launched a movement which it is especially hoped will gain the sympathy and coöperation of student-bodies in Europe and America, for an international peace song, to be sung at all gatherings, religious and lay, which have as their object the creation of good will among nations. The wide appeal of the new idea may be gathered from a letter received by The Commonweal from M. Emile Caen Dhurner, of Paris, its original promoter, claiming support from quarters so diverse as Cardinal Dubois, Archbishop of Paris, M. Briand, M. Herriot, and the eminent composer M. Charles W. Widor, who is perpetual secretary of the Beaux Arts, and under whose auspices the compositions that, it is hoped, will come in from musicians and poets, are to be judged.

WITH the best will in the world to such a laudable enterprise one may rest a little sceptical over its probable result. All the great popular songs, whose associations grow so powerful that the mere rendition of their opening bars act as a trumpet-call to the emotions—for instance, The Marseillaise, The Wearing of the Green, the Oberdan song which carried Italy into the allied ranks in the second year of war—owe their virtue to the appeal they make to the heroic element in man's soul. It is the misfortune of the cause of peace that, at least until some martyrology has accrued to it, its appeal must come home either to the in-

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telligence which has never inspired any popular song we ever heard of, or to pathos, whose function till now has been to reconcile man with evils judged inevitable rather than to foster a revolt against them. When these reservations have been reluctantly made, it is impossible not to wish well to such a movement as M. Dhurner, determined, like the Wesley brothers of old, that the devil shall not have all the best tunes, has so courageously inaugurated.

TAMMANY HALL, accustomed to abuse from the righteous in spite of the fact that its services to liberty in the new-born republic were most estimable, was probably startled by the eulogy delivered upon it by Professor Thomas Reed, formerly a city manager and now a member of the faculty of the University of Michigan. Expressing his conviction that the haunt of the sachems is "very greatly improved," Professor Reed went on to declare: "The leaders of Tammany are now at home in tuxedos and dress suits. Better dress does not necessarily mean more honesty, but no one can claim New York is now an example of bad government." No doubt this sly academic allusion to clothing is a questionable compliment when viewed historically; but it does direct one's eye to what has happened. The leaders of Tammany have become conscious of a reputation to uphold. Having grown aware of the importance of their metropolis in the conduct of state government, they saw that destiny had more in store for them than district politics or the harvesting of plums. Then Mr. Hearst kindly provided an opportunity for battling down certain venal groups, eager for service where the rewards were promised in greatest abundance. The Tammany which has emerged is supported by the ablest of New York newspapers, profits by the integrity of leaders like Governor Smith and Judge Olvany, and knows metropolitan etiquette. It swears by the most hopeful of all political maxims—respectability pays dividends. The circumstance that Professor Reed spoke as he did to the Institute of Public Affairs, assembled at Charlestown, Virginia, is evidence that good news travels far in spite of the static of prejudice.

DURING the course of an excellent paper on libraries contributed to a recent number of the Hibbert Journal, the director of the University of London School of Librarianship makes numerous deductions from statistics which are as applicable to this country as to England. He found out that most public libraries kept a supply of books (mostly fiction) which they knew to be trashy and crude, and that these were widely read by borrowers. The reason for this procedure is termed by the director the "groundbait theory"—the assumption that, if the library uses cheap books to attract "customers," it can eventually interest them in some of its better wares. He makes the following comment, every word of which deserves attention: "An ample supply of trashy literature corrupts the taste of those malleable persons who might have become intelligent readers had they met with wise and sympathetic treatment. Probably some readers are irreclaimable. At any rate, librarians say so, and go on to ask: 'If these poor creatures can't do without their drugs, their opiates, their poisons, what right have we to deny them?' No right at all perhaps; nor can we prevent their getting the stuff. But don't let us waste public funds and prostitute a worthy institution like the public library by providing it there. The public library was not established for any such purpose, and to allow it to take an active part in an industry that is steadily muddling the brains and coarsening the fibre of a large section of the community is a contradiction of all that it stands for. Let us be perfectly clear. This is not prohibition. Perhaps John Milton would not have had the same serene confidence that inspired him in Areopagitica were he writing in these days of a cheap and too often unscrupulous press. But it is not proposed to interfere with the liberty of the subject by cutting off supplies; only let us tell the dram-drinker to go elsewhere, instead of talking insincerely about half-doses and a homeopathic treatment that has never worked."

THE death of Father John Rickaby, S.J., of Stonyhurst College, England, will be deeply regretted by many in this country. Born in 1847 and ordained in 1878, Father Rickaby began his work as a thinker and teacher in the atmosphere of a notable Catholic revival. The accession of Leo XIII to the papal throne, the elevation of Newman to the cardinalate almost simultaneously with the publication of his Grammar of Assent, the work of Montalembert and Lacordaire in France, the fructifying of Catholic action in Germany —all these things and more testified to an intellectual and religious awakening. Father Rickaby's service was that of restating in modern language the scholastic concepts of metaphysics and epistemology, two difficult branches of thought which can never be associated with popularity. His books and lectures, known to a generation of college students, have introduced many to the major problems of thought and have earned for themselves a fine reputation for clarity and competence. That he did many other things well goes without saying; but these alone, meriting solid acclaim for both scholarship and purposiveness, render his life a model worthy of imitation.

FEW college professors have risen from their chairs to demand the same salary as that paid to football coaches. This reticence may be explained by saying that they need their existing salaries too badly, or by citing the modesty so characteristic of them. At any rate, one hopes the harmony of the campuses will not be disturbed by attempts to emulate the example set by the musicians of the Chicago symphony orchestra. These gentlemen, presided over so ably during the past year by Mr. Frederick Stock, have protested that

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$80.00 a week does not properly reimburse them for practice and rehearsal. "Therefore," declares the text of their ultimatum, "we are entitled to $100 a week, which is only what movie, dance-hall and restaurant musicians receive." This is a legitimate complaint to fling at the undiscriminating public, but one has only to think of the parallel situation of the professor and the coach to be greatly alarmed. Very much as the mentors of academia might respond to a purely hypothetical uprising among their faculties, the orchestra management replied that the business continued to show a deficit, that only gifts from patrons continued to keep it going, and that the employment of unprofitable assistants had not been taken into account by the complaint. Unfortunately for music-loving Chicago, though the professor cannot coach, the musician can go play in a restaurant. It is reported on excellent authority that, as a result, there will be no symphonies in Orchestra Hall next year and more music with the State Street menus. Still another report informs us that jazz, through the medium of a donation, will come to the rescue of classical art.

FATE AND A SUMMER DAY

"WITHOUT God in all, over all, through all—His moral will slowly working through the tumult of time toward an end worthy of the enterprise—human life and history are the most hideous nightmare that a devil ever dreamed," remarks the Reverend Joseph Fort Newton in a recent Hibbert Journal paper. One commends these words to contestants for a prize recently offered for the best play designed to counteract the tendency to suicide among the young. It may very conceivably be true—several statisticians have soberly affirmed it to be true — that the leaning to self-destruction is no more marked in our time than in other epochs. But that, after all, is a minor detail. The important fact is that so long as a man feels the hand of Love upon his arm, even the most dismal of human circumstances cannot altogether remove the radiance from the hours. But once all consciousness of Divinity has been abstracted completely from the affairs of the mind, the danger of despair is close by.

This contrast, borne out so strongly in individual living, is also of some significance in the affairs of society. If the authority to which we bow in sacrificing private desire to the common good is not verily given from on high, where does it come from and what is its value? How shall we avoid despair in the common enterprises which we promote in the name of the state if we have no right to believe them exempt from ending in nightmares? Indeed the number of things which urge us to hold this belief is incredibly large. On a single summer day we are asked to imbibe several large doses of pessimism. "I do not believe," says Rear-Admiral Hilary P. Jones, returning from the disarmament conference, "that any tangible results will be attained by these limitation of arms parleys. When the pacifists start clamoring for disarmament to prevent war, the manufacturers of arms immediately begin to receive large orders and make a lot of money." The implication seems to be that as soon as a peace party begins to influence public opinion, the war party takes fright and strengthens its position. But what a sorry world it would be if war and peace were merely a systole and diastole of humanity—if there were no genuine righteousness in promoting peace as against war.

At the Williamstown Institute of Politics, a speaker asserted that the Hungary of today is "a historical museum of mediaeval spirit and institutions, the most pathological case of national chauvinism now in existence." If this be even relatively true, if the Horthy land reform is but a mere mockery, what becomes of the hopes which were enkindled by the post-war decision to divide the old Hapsburg empire according to the "dictates of freedom"? Indeed, as one surveys the news of events in all of southern central Europe, what has become of the reams of fine talk which used to flutter about in such profusion? Nor is this all the disquieting information. A China deeper in the toils of intrigue and militaristic ambition than ever; a Russia that continues to sacrifice all of human welfare to an economic formula; and a Mexico in which indolent greed is continuously the explanation of tyranny and disaster—these are some of the more ominous current evils of social organization.

Order can be introduced into this chaos only by having faith that there is a "Power which makes for righteousness," not indeed automatically but with the help of those who seek the ends of justice and social benignity. The contention that politics and economics are nothing more than the working out of "laws" leads to that same despair which is now so often exemplified in individual lives. It is well that Catholics in particular should remember the words spoken by the American bishops in 1884:

"To argue that the Catholic Church is hostile to our great republic because she teaches that 'there is no power but from God'; because, therefore, back of the events which led to the formation of the republic she sees the Providence of God leading to that issue, and back of our country's laws the authority of God as their sanction—this is evidently so illogical and contradictory an accusation that we are astonished to hear it advanced by persons of ordinary intelligence. We believe that our country's heroes were the instruments of the God of nations in establishing this home of freedom; to both the Almighty and to His instruments in the work, we look with grateful reverence; and to maintain the inheritance which they have left us, should it ever—which God forbid—be imperiled, our Catholic citizens will be found ready to stand forward, as one man, ready to pledge anew 'their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor.'"

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THE LIRA RISES

By GEORGE E. ANDERSON

THE rehabilitation of a nation's finances is never a painless operation. Usually its painfulness increases with the necessity of taking the ordinary citizen into the government's confidence. Hence when the Italian government undertakes to set Italy on its feet financially by the direct, conscious effort of the artisan and peasant as well as the financier, the undertaking is fraught with more than ordinary interest.

It may be that Italy's lira will be advanced in value until finally it reaches its former par of a little over five to $1.00; it may be that it is the intention of the powers that be in Italy—otherwise known as "il duce" —to force its value up to something like ten to $1.00, and then stabilize the value at that point; or it may be that the value has been lifted above $.05 merely that it may be stabilized at something like that rate. There are proponents for all these theories. Sufficient for the purpose of this paper, perhaps, is the fact that, whereas the value of the lira in international markets in January, 1921, was only $.034, and very uncertain at that, its value in international exchange in April, 1927, approached $.06, and the Italian government had the power further to increase it. Later the value receded somewhat as a result of government action, and since then has remained around $.055. In the earlier part of this six-year period, the lira was saved from disaster only by government intervention and market manipulation. In the later part, when all else had failed, it was brought to its rehabilitated state by nothing more than the united effort of a nation to improve its economic situation and drag itself out of a financial slough—a simple expedient, which has not often occurred to nations. The best thing about the idea is that it works.

Immediately after the outbreak of the world war the lira went to a premium, but it fell rapidly when Italy entered the struggle, descending to $.11 by 1918, rising to about $.15 with the allied victory in the autumn of that year, then dropping steadily in 1919 and 1920. Since Fascism came into power the value has hovered around the $.04 point. It has been announced from time to time in the past two years that the government was preparing plans for the rehabilitation of Italian currency but little was thought of such statements until about the beginning of the current year, when lira exchange commenced to move forward in a rather sensational way without governmental or other manipulation but at the same time carefully supported and controlled by the government's use of gold exchange which it had gradually accumulated. By the last week in April, as has been said, the value of the lira, at nearly $.06, was so high, comparatively, that its further rise was curtailed by the foreign exchange bureau of the Italian government, lest the continued advance interfere seriously with Italian export trade.

The recovery in value of the lira in recent months is remarkable for several reasons. In the first place all authorities seem to agree that it is permanent, for it has been brought about in the face of great difficulties by natural forces without artificial manipulation. Summed up in one sentence, the situation simply means that the Italian people, through their government, decided that it was to the interest of the nation that the value of the lira be advanced, and that they set about accomplishing that end individually and collectively by the ordinary rules of political economy. The policy of the government has been indicated in a statement issued by the cabinet itself officially declaring its intention to pursue the following program:

1. Constant endeavor to increase the gold exchange value of the lira.
2. Gradual reduction in the country's note circulation, especially retiring the notes issued for advances to the national treasury.
3. A steady increase in the gold reserve against outstanding paper money and an absolute balancing of the budget with an actual surplus.
4. Organization and development of all national productive forces.
5. Reliance solely upon natural means of maintaining the exchange value of the lira and rejection of all artificial means.

The first notable feature of the governmental program is that it has had loyal support from the Italian people. They have worked, they have saved, they have made personal financial sacrifices. Proof that the budget is actually balanced and producing a surplus is afforded in the fact that the government is paying its debts, domestic and foreign, without borrowing more money, the domestic debt payments being evidenced by the reduction of the note circulation issued for the benefit of the government by about 1,000,000,000 lire in the past four years. It is now being further reduced by about 100,000,000 lire monthly, thus not only paying the debt but increasing the value of the lira by the reduction of currency inflation. Payments on the country's foreign debt are well known. The government has brought currency circulation within its control by providing for the concentration of the note-issuing power in the Bank of Italy, arranging for the retirement of the notes of the Bank of Naples and the Bank of Sicily. It has arranged for the central control of foreign exchange by concentrating all foreign exchange transactions in an organization known as the Italian Institute of Exchange.

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The influence of this organization upon the exchange value of the lira is indicated by the fact that the proceeds of the recent bond issues of the cities of Rome and Milan for $30,000,000 each placed in the United States were held by the Institute abroad in dollars, while the equivalent in lire at current rates of exchange was paid the two cities concerned under an agreement by which they were to be provided with gold exchange at the same rate for the payment of interest and amortization funds when due. By this operation any competition for dollars was prevented and the value of the lira was maintained; at the same time the government retained a large amount of dollar exchange in its control for the purpose of advancing or retarding the movement of dollar-lira exchange on the international market, and, in practical effect, built up a gold reserve. The Institute of Exchange is following a similar course with respect to private exchange transactions.

This practical application of sound banking methods, coupled with an intelligent application of the principles of economics, however, does not account for the entire change in Italy's monetary position. These are merely the means by which the actual improvement has been registered and adjusted to the country's financial affairs. The value of the lira has been increased in the first place by the balancing of the Italian budget and the contraction in the country's currency. A secondary cause has been a decrease in Italian payments abroad made possible by an increase in domestic production of foodstuffs and other items usually imported. A third cause lies in the increase in the country's income from tourists. Speculation in the value of the lira on foreign markets has also had some effect. But the dominating factor, giving practical effect to all these causes, is the determination of the Italian people to improve their financial position by industry and economy. There has been no whining, no international recriminations, no alibis. Without making odious comparisons one can at least feel inspiration in the spectacle of a people setting determinedly about the task of paying their just debts and putting their financial house in order. The moral aspect of the effort is not the least of the factors which are making the effort a success.

These improvements in Italy's financial situation have been made in the face of extraordinary difficulties. The visible balance of trade is against Italy by a large margin, because of an excess of imports due primarily to the country's need of raw materials and of a considerable portion of its food supply. The first need remains, but an increasing part of the food supply is now being furnished at home; under the constant urge and supervision of the government, the Italian farmer is made to produce more than he has ever produced before. The large normal adverse balance of trade is augmented by an immense foreign debt interest and amortization account. The world war left Italy with a larger debt, compared with its pre-war wealth, than any other of the victorious allies. Against these adverse items are the income from tourists, the earnings of Italian shipping and investments abroad, and the remittances from Italian emigrants—one of the largest items in the account. Whether these credits will balance the debit account is yet to be seen. The fact remains that, despite difficulties, Italian international finances have improved.

Then, too, there is the matter of the influence of deflation on national industry. As the lira increases in value the cost-price of Italian products of all sorts is increased in terms of gold, and competition with the products of other countries becomes increasingly difficult. The usual results of deflation are decreased exports, decreased production, decreased employment and decreased wages. All these results are to be noted, it is true, in recent Italian trade and industrial returns, but, on the whole, to a rather remarkably limited extent. Italian exports in the first three months of the current year decreased by a little more than 100,000,000 lire, but imports decreased by over 400,000,000 lire; the international financial position of the country was strengthened by the decrease, and at the same time decreased imports in some lines indicated increased domestic production. Unemployment increased considerably, being placed officially at 259,000 at the end of February, 1927, as compared with 126,000 in February, 1926, 157,000 in February, 1925, and 181,000 in February, 1924. Yet the 1927 number is not excessive, and increased unemployment represents a national sacrifice which the country can endure as an emergency condition. The government indicated a due regard to the industrial situation when it halted the too rapid rise of the lira exchange in the last week in April. For the rest, it remains true that with all the disadvantages of the appreciation in the value of the lira, the advantages on the whole overbalance the disadvantages. Doubtless further sacrifices will be required of the people of Italy before Italian financial rehabilitation is complete. The significant feature of the matter is the spirit in which they are facing these sacrifices.

Let us generalize and moralize a little. The state is merely the aggregation of individuals comprising its people. The financial obligations of a state are the financial obligations of its people, in the aggregate but considered also as individuals. Financial prosperity of a state depends upon the financial prosperity of its individual citizens at least with respect to the government. The way for a state to pay its debts is for the people of the state to set to work and earn the money with which to pay them. There are no short cuts in the process. In fact there is no other way. The chief factor in the improvement of Italy's financial position has been the determination of the Italian people to put their country upon its feet financially by personal, individual industry and self-sacrifice. There are few, if any, examples in history of such a conscious effort to such an end.

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MEXICO IN THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

By JAMES J. WALSH

IT WOULD be very hard indeed for the ordinary educated American to believe that Mexico, before the revolution by which she achieved her independence from Spain in 1821, was further advanced in education and all that word connotes than was English America. Any such idea would seem utterly absurd. And yet Professor Edward Gaylord Bourne, of Yale, a recognized authority on the history of Spanish America, says not only that Mexico was ahead of English America in education during the period in question, but that, before the end of the sixteenth century, the opportunities afforded for education in Mexico were superior to anything that existed in English America for the next three centuries.

The expression is such a paradox for most of us that his own words must be quoted. In the concluding chapter of his volume Spain in America—the third volume of the American Nation Series edited by Professor Albert Bushnell Hart, of Harvard—there occurs the following statement:

> Not all the institutions of learning founded in Mexico can be enumerated here [the list is too long for his summary chapter] but it is not too much to say that in number, range of studies and standard of attainments by the officers they surpassed anything existing in English America until the nineteenth century.

Evidence bearing out the complete truth of this surprising comparison may be found in abundance on the shelves of the New York public library. The seeker for this knowledge has only to look over the books which were published in Mexico during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to be convinced.

It is sometimes said that the first book printed in America was the Bay Psalm Book, published in Massachusetts about 1640. This assertion, however, is based on the complacent assumption that we in the north represent the only America worth talking about. The first book printed on this continent really issued from the press in Mexico more than a hundred years before the Bay Psalm Book. It was entitled Escala Espiritual para Llegar al Cielo—Spiritual Ladder for Reaching Heaven.

Arranged in chronological order on the shelves of the reserve room of the library are hundreds of books printed in Mexico before the beginning of the seventeenth century. Many of them are quite distinctive. Printing was not a decade old before the first wood engraving printed in the new world appeared. This was the title-page of John Gerson's Tripartito (Threefold Knowledge Necessary for Salvation) published in 1544. It is a picture of the Blessed Virgin putting a chasuble over the head of a favorite saint, with the words above and below, "Ave Maria, Gratia Plena, Dominus Tecum." The woodcut is well done, the expressions of the group are rendered ably with the use of but very few lines. The Blessed Virgin's own face suggests all the gracious dignity of a queen conferring a favor on one of her subjects.

In 1551 a commentary on Aristotle's Logic appeared with a beautifully engraved title page. The frame for this page, as is clear from the legend on it, was made in London. It had been especially imported into Mexico to provide an appropriate setting for the title of the first volume on Aristotle issued on this continent. Some three years before this, a volume of the laws of the colony had been printed under the patronage of that most magnanimous of the viceroys, Mendoza. (This is not in the library, but is one of the treasures of the John Carter Brown collection in Providence.) In order to give this volume of the laws of the colony an appropriate dignity, the title-page was printed in two colors, red and black, and the result is rather striking and attractive. Then there is a volume of excerpts from the writings of Saint Bonaventure, who was a professor of philosophy at the University of Paris in the glorious thirteenth century. This was adorned with a series of plates. The more one studies these early Mexican books the more it becomes evident that beauty as well as utility was the aim of the publisher, that he was willing to spend time and trouble and expense in order to secure attractive results.

All of this printing was done practically within a hundred years of the invention of printing. Readers with especially modern ideas of human progress might be inclined to suppose that the printed books of this early time were crude specimens. Actually, the books printed in the first generation of printing are the most beautiful ever produced in the history of the art. Spain had been particularly interested in the art of printing. Altogether there are some 800 incunabula—books printed before 1501—in Spain. This is nearly twice the number that appeared in England at the same time. It was only to be expected, then, that printing in Mexico would develop early and would develop beautifully.

In 1561 the Missale Romanum Ordinarium, printed by Antonio de Espinoza, made its appearance, carrying the first printing of music on this continent. However, the book is famous for much more than this. It is a beautifully rubricated example of missal printing and is one of the most noteworthy volumes in the whole history of printing. The copy in the New York public library is in excellent preservation. It was a special gift made to the Lenox library long ago, and would command a high price in an auction room. I doubt whether any book ever printed in America has surpassed it in beauty of type face, spacing, quality of

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paper, clearness of impression—in a word, in anything that goes to make up a really beautiful book.

Most of the books which appeared during the first century of printing in Mexico were religious. The great majority of them were for the instruction of the Indians, so many of whom were learning to read, as well as for the missionaries who had to teach the Indians and must therefore know their languages. There were catechisms and books of religious instruction, and also dictionaries and grammars in more than a dozen of the early Mexican tongues. Besides these, however, there were books of law, of history, of medicine, and a number of collections of sermons for the use of the clergy who were deeply intent on providing instruction in such a way as would attract attention.

When the books published in English America a full century later are compared with these Mexican productions of the sixteenth century, the immense difference between them is apparent at once. One need only glance at the shelves to see how comparatively insignificant are the English publications. The one work of any importance which appeared in New England was Eliot's Bible for the Indians—a distinguished, scholarly work, though it is matched by similar publications for Indians of a dozen different languages or more down in Mexico. The rest of the English publications consist almost entirely of sermons and almanacs. English America was more deeply interested in the almanac than any other book because it foretold the weather and gave astrological hints with regard to illness and its treatment. In a word, there is nothing approaching the serious historical works—some of them in many volumes—written and published in this early day by Mexican scholars, not a few of whom were of pure Indian race.

An interesting section of the Mexican shelves is devoted to the books on medicine. The first of these, written by Francesco Bravo, was published in 1570 in the city of Mexico. This was not the first contribution to medical science made as the result of observations over here, however. Three years before, Dr. Pedrarias de Benavides had published at Valladolid, in Spain, his Secretos de Chirurgia (Secrets of Surgery) the material for which was gathered by medical experience in New Spain, as Mexico was called. A volume on surgery, Summa y Recopilacion de Cirurgia, by Alphonso Lopez de Hinojoso, was printed in Mexico before the end of the century. Other books on medicine and surgery continued to be published during the seventeenth century.

Compare with that record our medical publications in English America. In reviewing that phase of our progress in 1876, on the completion of the first century of our national life, Dr. John S. Billings, the greatest living authority on medical bibliography at the time, said:

> At the commencement of the Revolutionary War we had one medical book by an American author, three reprints and about twenty pamphlets.

That one medical book was a little compend, as Billings tells us, made as a pocket manual for the young surgeons of the Revolutionary War, with but a single original observation in it. It was published 205 years after the first medical work, containing many an original observation, was printed in the city of Mexico.

All that is needed for anyone who really wants to know how much further ahead Mexico was in education than the American colonies, let it be repeated, is a short time at the shelves of the reserve room of the New York public library. Then it will be easier for him to understand that when Harvard had scarcely a hundred students, Mexico had about a thousand, and that, while Harvard did not become a full-fledged university, with medical and law schools, until the nineteenth century, the University of Mexico had its divinity school, its law school and its medical school many years before the end of the sixteenth. It is not necessary for us to depend on tradition to tell us about these things. They can be seen by anyone who cares to take even a little trouble to look for them.

Humboldt's account of his visit to Mexico at the beginning of the nineteenth century bears testimony to the fact that this devotion to education and cultural superiority over English America continued until the Mexican Revolution. With short interruptions, the unfortunate influence of that has continued ever since. See what has happened and judge the meaning of it by what we know of the past.

Avignon

Gregory, mighty Pope, looks down
On the little twilit town,
Rosy town of Avignon;
Seeing rock and roof and spire
And the grey hill, rising higher,
Shutting out the sun;
Children playing, old men sleeping
By the white road-ribbon creeping
Where Rhone waters run.

Now the Provence moon is up,
Stars are jewels in night's cup,
God hath planned it fair.
Bells ring out the vesper hour,
Gregory, from his lofty tower,
Breathes a humble prayer
For the moon and stars that shine,
And earth, drinking of the wine
That skies gladly share.

Provence men in far-off Spain,
Flanders, Anjou, gay Touraine,
Dream them of their home—
He, secure in Avignon,
Waits to see the morning sun
Striking through the gloam.
Ah, poor Lord of Christendom,
Listening, as for a drum
Beating, slow, in Rome.

VINCENT ENGELS.

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THE EASEL AND THE TOMB

By EDYTHE HELEN BROWNE

WILLIAM BLAKE, the hundredth anniversary of whose death occurred on August 12, was mightier with the brush than with the pen because his message sprang beyond the horizon of word-control. The meaning of most of his poetry is lost in a blizzard of symbolism and imagery. The Songs of Innocence and the Songs of Experience, sweet with the music of those twin lyrics, The Lamb and The Tiger, are perhaps his most graceful gestures with the pen because the themes are simple. But when he grapples in epic combat with such colossal problems as are typified in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell and other many-volumed works, the reader frets for meaning. It is the painter, then, rather than the poet, who we feel deserves complimentary, if fragmentary, analysis in this essay.

Blake was an illustrator, a maker of valentines who decked his own pages of poetry in lacy designs of India ink. He also served poetry in more elaborate style by paneling his volumes with colored and engraved plates. His brush or graver invariably catches favorite motifs. Vengeance descends in fiery skirts, Peace inhabits broad tree-trunks, the valets of hell outfit the demons in silver-skin uniforms, Birth is the wax infant in an incubating cloud. But by far the most recurrent motif is the death theme or more specifically, the Blakean tomb tableau. The symbolical and historical subjects often don clinging cerements, the poetic conceptions create clammy draughts from mausoleum doors ajar, and the biblical and sacred studies again and again depict the slim, white hand of Christ beckoning a dead daughter from the twilight of the tomb.

Early familiarity with the kings and queens of Westminster Abbey as they stiffened in effigy may have palely overcast Blake's imagination. Basire, the master-engraver, perched the young apprentice on a scaffold high among the historic cobwebs of the Abbey and bade him copy the frozen smile of gentle Eleanor and the stony stares of immortals in the poet's corner. The unsuspecting verger often shut the boy up with death for the night. But one inclines to the belief that Blake's fondness for mortuary design was but the home-stretch of an imagination forever racing in a spiritual marathon. Blake was madly curious about eternity. He stood between the huge canyons of time and eternity and sought to pull them together with one, great artistic gesture. He was the deep-sea diver coming to the surface with speculative plunder from the depths of spirituality. The tomb is the portal of eternity so by the tomb he pitched his easel.

Death's Door, an early engraving designed by Blake for Blair's Grave, shows an old man hunched against the open door of a vault. This veteran never put two feet in the grave for he had work to do on earth as Blake's "reliable mourner." At death-bed and on cypress heights, wherever the painter chose to entertain death, the S-shaped figure of the bearded old man, with back bending over and knees bending under, appears. In The Body of Christ Borne to the Tomb he is Nicodemus, holding the vase of spices; he is the sorrowing prowler among subterranean caverns in The Tomb; he lends his cowled face and cascading hair to Ezekiel and the lamenting women in The Death of Ezekiel's Wife, introducing Blake's symbolism of consorting grief and sorrow with averted gaze and blinding hair; and in the vision-loaded poems—The Gates of Paradise, Jerusalem, etc.—the old man rides on the painter's brush. Death's Door developed from an isolated pencil sketch into a serial composition animating most of Blake's canvas obsequies. The Ancient of Days, a famous work, is the same old man, measuring the earth with a gleaming compass. He has given up undertaking for carpentry.

The artist not only blanches the face of death and collapses the attending figures into lamenting poses but he dramatizes the scene by casting a death-spell over inanimate objects. Never did bald hills have such solemn profile, never did ground have such blank sterility, as in the water-color Famine, where dead and dying creatures wither together. The Bellman of the Plague, a rare print, in which three disconsolate mourners, ignored by the black-cloaked bellman, beseech a tomb door to give back a loved one, is doubly tragic because of the grim plunge of the bellman's beaked hat about his ears and the prominence of the tolling tongue in his bell. Cold horror creeps on face and pose in the Testament story, The Body of Abel Found by Adam and Eve; yet it is the awful shininess of the shovel against the dark trough of the grave that best interprets.

Most of Blake's epitaphs are purposely free of background to magnify the vulturous mood of death. He conceived sorrow not as a passing state, but as an all-absorbing emotion, incapable of relieving touches, a crystallization of tears and sighs that nothing could soften. Thus in The Crucifixion, from Jerusalem, a work suggesting Dürer's Passion, there are no conventional storm clouds, no weeping Maries, no quaking mountains, only the bruise-puffed figure of Christ sketched against solid black with sparkles of light outlining the form like a radium crucifix in a dark room. Even in The Judgment Day there is an arising of souls from graveclothes, but there is no starry nor sainted heaven to receive them; only a dim octagon, like some heavenly skylight, supplies perspective. Frequently Blake not only dispenses with background but he stands his easel in the background. Soldiers Casting Lots for Christ's Garments is action

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behind the three crosses on Calvary—an unusual treatment.

The poet-painter wooed inspiration from the lenten episodes in Christ's life. On no other mission has his brush been so nimble in portraying movement, the slow, dignified movement of sacred company. Angels Hovering over the Body of Jesus almost trembles with the spiring movement of angelic wings meeting at the tips and arching in Gothic flight. An experiment in tempera, The Body of Christ Borne to the Tomb, imitates the monotonous tread of a funeral procession. The sacred burden is carried by four apostles whose sandaled feet drag and falter; the Blessed Virgin and Magdalen follow with sparing steps of timid resignation. The pensive Blake has embalmed the miracles of Christ in enduring art as in The Raising of Jairus's Daughter, Christ Raising the Son of the Widow of Nain and The Raising of Lazarus. Again movement is masterfully handled in the upward sweep of the Saviour's extended arm. The arm is elongated, another instance of Blake's distortion of anatomy. His men and women are abnormally tall and big, reminiscent of the brawny force of Michael Angelo.

Usually Blake's brush wore faded mustachios, for when he colored his work he often picked anaemic shades except for sharply contrasting elements, as the vermilion and flame against black in The Ancient of Days. Not only death attracted the artist but death's reciprocal colors—livid indigo, cobalt or clay blue, gamboge or jaundice yellow, skull white and Frankfort black. William Rossetti called Famine, achieved in staid grey-violet tones, "very terrible and grimly quiet." The blue light darting from the body of the pestilential devil in The Death of the First Born, a water-color with pen outline, now owned by the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, makes one visualize the nether regions, not in red hideousness but in blue. An angel with brunette wings is a sober note in the otherwise heaven-lit picture of The Angel Rolling the Stone from the Sepulchre of Christ. Blake also swathed his figures in contrasting ethers of light and shade.

When Blake was not designing for his own poetry he was illustrating the works of others. It is strangely significant and illuminative of our portrayal of him as a "tomb" artist, an observer of warm flesh turning cold, that he chose to represent those writers who also mourned. Milton's Paradise Lost and Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress take added substance under his brush; Dante himself would have complimented Blake for his interpretations of Il Penseroso and the Divina Comedia, the latter executed in 100 designs. Young's Night Thoughts, Blair's Grave and Gray's sad poems —the bitter contributions of all these weary poets were pictorially intensified by Blake. Of the Books of the Bible he preferred to illustrate the woe-bound Book of Job. At the behest of the necromancer, John Varley, Blake drew that famous visionary bit, The Ghost of a Flea. True to his main impulse, he kept close to anyone who might have access to eternity.

MASS IN THE PENITENTIARY

By GEORGE BARTON

THERE was a grey mist in the sky on the morning when we went to hear Mass in the old penitentiary. The great, gloomy edifice, with its bastile-like proportions, stood out like some grim castle silhouetted against the darker background of the clouds. The lofty towers on each corner gave it an air of deep mystery not unmixed with romance. On the platforms surrounding these towers armed sentinels paced up and down.

Coming closer to the massive, moldering walls, one experiences a touch of that despairing feeling which must clutch at the heart of those who are doomed to spend the precious hours of life within it. The enormous main door, studded with great iron bolts and containing the small entrance gate, adds to the terrifying aspect of the living tomb. A ring of the bell, answered by the rattling of many bolts, and we are in the antechamber of the entrance to the penitentiary. The guards are courteous enough, but when they proceed a few yards, only to open another barred gate which leads to the yard of the prison, we begin to understand what is meant by the loss of liberty.

The prison proper is just before us. As we are about to step across the threshold we are attracted by the muffled sound of shuffling feet. The corridors, converging like the spokes of a wheel to a common hub, are filled with men. The doors of most of the cells have been thrown open, and the convicts are filing out toward the inner yard of the penitentiary. Headed by keepers they make their way toward an old building which once served the purpose of a warehouse. It is here that Mass is to be celebrated.

Instructed to follow the crowd we find ourselves engulfed in that moving mass of human wreckage. A narrow outside stairway leads to the upper story of the warehouse. Someone near the head of the dismal procession has stumbled, the line is halted for the moment, and we glance around at that collection of hopeless-looking faces. They seem alike and yet strangely unlike, in their colorless prison garb. It is impossible to make distinctions between pickpockets, forgers, embezzlers, thieves, bandits, kidnapers, counterfeiters, firebugs, drunkards, bootleggers and murderers. They are all there, some for one, two, ten, twenty years, others for life. They move mechanically, with shuffling gait, until they are all finally herded in the great, bare room, which for the time being has been turned into a chapel for the celebration of the central mystery of the Catholic Faith.

Some of the convicts dip their fingers in the holy-water font at the entrance, and the spontaneous way in which it is done indicates that one of the early habits of youth has persisted in spite of the departure from the straight and narrow path. We look at those rows of dejected faces. The prison pallor is upon most of them. Some are sullen; others betray the depth of despair.

But the moment the priest comes out upon the altar a change is evident in the demeanor of most of this strange congregation. There is an awakening of interest, and in particular cases, an appearance of reverence which seems to be unquestionably genuine. The great drama of the Crucifixion is to be unrolled before their wondering eyes. The purple vestments of the celebrant remind these penitents that this is the penitential season; the amice around his neck tells them of how Christ was blindfolded, buffeted and spat upon; the alb, the long white gown reaching to his feet, symbolizes the garb in which the Saviour was sent from Herod to Pilate, mocked and despised as a fool; the cincture which keeps the gown in place is

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the cord that bound the Divine Victim; the maniple, hanging from the left arm, is that other cord by which He was bound to the pillar when He was scourged for our sins; the stole, crossed on the breast, betokens the way in which He was fastened to the cross; the chasuble, with its embroidered cross, signifies the seamless garment for which the soldiers cast lots.

The priest has taken his place at the foot of the altar. The Mass has begun and the opening strains of mournful yet appealing music come from a portable organ played by one of the prisoners. The lighted candles, symbolizing the light of faith and charity, flicker in the gentle breeze that comes through an open window. Each successive move of the priest on his journey to Calvary is followed with rapt attention by these men who have numbers instead of names. Some of them have prayer books; others finger their beads; still others simply move the lips in silent recitation of once familiar prayers.

At the foot of the altar there begins the ceremony which depicts the life of Christ from His Incarnation to His Ascension into heaven. The celebrant bows low and strikes his breast with his hand, praying God to forgive his own unworthiness. He slowly ascends the steps and devoutly kisses the stone in the centre of the sacred table—the stone containing relics of the saints and marked with the five crosses representing the five wounds of Our Lord. After the Epistle the book is removed to the Gospel side of the altar, all rising out of respect for the Word of God. The Creed is recited, every knee bowing at the words which tell how Christ became man for our salvation.

The priest takes the cover from the chalice. He moves to the Epistle side of the altar, and as he washes his hands we recall how Pilate once washed his hands of the innocent blood of his Victim. Later the wine and water are poured into the chalice, signifying the union of the humanity with the divinity of Christ. Presently the celebrant spreads his hands over the chalice to indicate that the awful moment of the consecration is at hand. The bell rings and a tense silence ensues. The priest raises the host in his uplifted hands: "This Is My Body." He kneels and repeats the action with the chalice: "This Is My Blood."

Hundreds of bowed heads are raised and emotion is depicted upon many faces that had previously been sullen and stolid. Before they have recovered from the tenseness of the moment the silence is suddenly broken by a clear, baritone voice bursting into the melodious strains of the Agnus Dei. Fervently all join in the cry: "Lamb of God, Who takest away the sins of the world, grant us peace."

The priest reads the Gospel of the day in a clear, understanding manner and speaks of the penitent thief. He talks as any preacher might talk to any congregation. But his words have special meaning for this congregation. Their eyes are glued to him; they drink in every sentence. The brief discourse ended, the Mass hurries to its conclusion. Between them, convict 1472, at the organ, and convict 2563, holding a sheet of music, join in a duet expressing gratitude to God for the privilege of having participated in the Sacrifice. All kneel, the priest gives them the last blessing. The Mass is ended.

Once again comes the shuffling and scraping of feet, and the congregation stream toward the narrow cells they call home. One, at least, of the strangers who have attended the ceremony has a choking feeling in the throat. He hurries into the light and sunshine, outside those gloomy walls. And, with a feeling of humility, he thinks of the words of the Englishman, who, on seeing a man led to execution, exclaimed: "There, but for the grace of God, goes John Bradford!"

A COMMUNICATION

ON KEEPING OUR HEROES ORTHODOX

Louisville, Kentucky.

TO the Editor:—While Mr. Hopkins's letter in answer to Mr. Murphy's article of July 6 is undoubtedly correct in maintaining that a leader of the past cannot be judged according to existing conditions, there are aspects of present-day conditions of which it seems he is not aware.

To say that all our lands are occupied is, in the first place, far from correct. Of course the eastern part of the country is far more densely populated than in the time of Jefferson, and the western much more open to immigration. But even the eastern part of our country is sparsely settled in comparison with any part of Europe. God made the world for us all and if all came who wished to come, America still could not compare with Europe.

Mr. Hopkins must not know that, according to the statistics of our government, the ratio per thousand of illiterates and paupers is greater in the native than in the foreign element. And while we are assimilating them and teaching them some of the things we have to teach, we may learn from them how to live on less—to live on what we waste, as they tell us they can do. In that way, providing for a greater number will not be a greater problem.

Thomas Jefferson, co-founder of our country, was a citizen of the world, and I believe if he were still living he would take the same stand he took when he was living. Apart from the humanitarian side of the question, our failure to take the surplus population of Europe is a detriment to ourselves, just as the failure to take care of a member of our own body is injurious to all the members. Finally, in time to come, if America overflows there are many unsettled islands; possibly one of us may be, if not the Columbus, at least the Vasco de Gama, or the Sir Walter Raleigh, of another land. And if the savage inhabitants object to immigrants, they may be moved to forget their objections in the light of Christianity. In taking this stand, I speak in the name of those of my forefathers who were among the founders of one of the original thirteen colonies.

Woman was created to be the helpmate of man, and I believe if Jefferson were living today he would advocate her retaining her true position as stoutly as he did in 1807. From our Spanish sisters we might learn the lesson of ruling through our men by means of the influence of a wonderfully womanly womanhood, not by usurping their places.

If whisky was poisonous, it was for the same reason that it is poisonous today—because it was not properly made. Too many doctors used it and considered it the thing to save their influenza patients for it to have been generally poisonous before prohibition. Jefferson was too true a democrat to circumscribe people's liberty with a law like the Eighteenth Amendment, and too wise a man to expect to be able to. I have no doubt he would have rejoiced to see the beneficial effect on the weak ones of humanity accomplished by a Father Matthew. But can he seriously be conceived of as a patron of the Anti-saloon League? Never.

ANASTASIA M. LAWLER.

(The Commonweal invites its readers to send in communications expressing individual views on all topics that are of public interest, regardless of whether or not such topics have been previously discussed in its columns.—The Editors.)

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THE SUMMER THEATRE

By R. DANA SKINNER

A La Carte

THE critics of some of the daily papers must have been seized with an attack of midsummer cynicism when they reviewed Rosalie Stewart's A La Carte. Perhaps they felt that the manageress who has so ably furthered the destinies of George Kelly by producing The Show-Off, Craig's Wife and Daisy Mayme ought not to have the temerity to stage an evening of musical entertainment. Or perhaps they expected entirely too much, and in that way administered an indirect compliment. Whatever the cause, the first night reviews were discouraging. It is a keen pleasure, then, to record that I have seldom passed as delightful an evening in the theatre as during the progress of this same A La Carte.

To be quite truthful—it has its dull moments. It does trespass on one's patience every now and then by the introduction of ancient vaudeville wheezes, mother-in-law jokes and the like. But there is an honest effort to give wholesome eye-and-ear-filling entertainment. Only one number—that having to do with the career of certain Palm Beach ladies—indulges in the usual cynical smartnesses; and as revues go these days, that is quite a record. What I would like to emphasize, however, is the captivating combination achieved of fresh informality with professional sureness of attack. The musical numbers and the sketches are well done, some of them exceedingly well done. No pains have been spared in staging, and the whole production is pervaded by a heart-warming evidence of good taste.

This begins with the very first scene—a novel form of introduction, in which all the performers appear as guests at a large dinner and are gracefully introduced by the toastmaster, Charles Irwin. This being the Hors d'Oeuvres, the evening naturally closes with a reversion to the same scene entitled Patisserie. Admittedly nothing startling—yet singularly pleasant, like the familiar "How do you do" opening of the Charlot revue. This is followed—after an interlude of dance specialties—by the first of several George Kelly sketches. I can readily understand a certain disappointment in these sketches. They are not in the form of one-act plays. They have no particular beginning nor end, no dramatic quality. But to balance this, they reflect Mr. Kelly's incomparable power of observation. They are essentially transcripts of life, heightened somewhat to project them across the footlights. The first, called The Hotel Porch, is simply the ineffable stupidity of rocking-chair life and gossip at the seaside. The characters are all easily recognizable types, but the expert Kelly technique shows in the economy of words with which types are indicated.

The second sketch, called Between Numbers, is by far the best. It is made up of the dressing-room gossip between a vaudeville prima donna and her maid. Rose King and Helen Lowell take the parts. Possibly some of the point would be lost on those unfamiliar with the bite of stage slang, but I rather think that theatrical gossip columns have initiated the public into that particular masonry. At all events, Helen Lowell gets one of the best lines in the revue when she tells of the sudden death of a certain vaudeville actress's husband. The demise occurred in Duluth. So, says Miss Lowell, "she took the body to Chicago and opened cold at the Riverside."

The third sketch, coming in the second half of the program, is rather too reminiscent of W. C. Field's famous act in the Follies. Daisies on the Green is its delectable title, and it all concerns the golfing leisure of the wife of the country club's president, while a male foursome is fidgeting on the outskirts. Once more Helen Lowell carries the burden of inane lines with her masterly authority. But like all the other sketches, it fades out and lacks a pungent curtain line or situation. In this, as in his last play, Daisy Mayme, Mr. Kelly is placing too heavy a load on mere expert recording of human speech. Not everything that is true to life is also entertaining or interesting. In fact, most of us go to the theatre to escape the drabness of life and live in the illusion of unusual happenings. That is the core of drama—also the spice of entertainment.

The livelier parts of the revue, the music and dancing, are well taken care of by an assembly of specialty artists as notable for their expert performances as for their fresh and youthful individuality. One Bobby Arnst takes authoritative charge of the more energetic dances, and finds valiant support in a fresh, hard-working and incisively rhythmic chorus. Billy Bradford displays an acrobatic ability of rare scope without giving one that uncomfortable sense of heroic effort. Interludes of music and various reprises are provided by the three Giersdorf sisters, with a charm that is quite elusive.

But A La Carte would be more than worth its box-office price for two numbers which grace the first half of the program, and a gorgeous burlesque in the second half. The first of these numbers, Italy, manages in spite of the obstacles of environment to create a genuine illusion. The song which accompanies it is quite as idiotic as most, but tuneful, and the variations worked out in instrumentation and dancing are little short of captivating. No small part of the allurement comes from the first appearance of Harriet Hoctor, a young dancer about whom more anon.

The second act burlesque is called Sunny Spain. Here again, the settings and choral arrangements catch an amazing atmosphere without bulging into excessive realism. The number starts off seriously enough, and then that amazing comedienne, Rose King, proceeds to bring down the house. She lacks the subtlety of Beatrice Lillie, but is quite the nearest approach to her on the American stage. Miss King's absurd use of castanets is a touch that even her English rival could not have surpassed.

The number of numbers, however, is the Russian ballet which closes the first act. With musical excerpts from the score by Joseph Bayer, settings designed by Hudiakoff, and a staging by Theodore Bekefi which even the Chauve Souris could not improve upon, this number comes as near to the perfection of Russian ballet technique as anything attempted on our stage. Many of the regular revue cast are employed, but their work is so beautifully welded into the satire of The Fairy Doll story that it becomes a unit apart, something of rare artistic achievement. The theme is the rather old one of a toy shop coming to life after the closing hour, but the handling is brilliant and novel. Its crowning moment is the dancing of Harriet Hoctor. This young person has all the perfection of ballet technique without its usual stiffness. She has grace and apparent informality of movement, a superb use of hands and arms, an extraordinary equilibrium and a fresh, unspoiled beauty into the bargain. She does not, unfortunately, show the masterly intelligence that one feels behind every movement of Anna Pavlowa. With all her perfection, Miss Hoctor's work has both the charm and the defects of immaturity. But there is no dancer in New York today, at least in the musical shows, who can touch her.

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BOOKS

The Ingenious Hidalgo—Miguel Cervantes, by Han Ryner; translated from the French by J. H. Lewis. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.75.

WHAT a fascinating book this is! As moving as a lyrical poem, it bewitches one into forgetfulness of all time but the days of Cervantes. It would be difficult to imagine, for instance, any human experience so enjoyable as accompanying him on one of his journeys from Madrid to Esquivias. Swift narrative, striking description, illuminating exposition, living personalities, sharp, pointed dialogue, bitter as well as pleasant —all are combined in this novelization of the life of the greatest of Spaniards in the world of letters, in this glorification of the ingenious hidalgo—Miguel Cervantes.

Enthusiastic as one may become, however, about the style and the method of presentation, he must make loud his complaint that truth has been sacrificed for art. Assuredly, any reader who happens to make the acquaintance of Cervantes through this book will carry away an entirely wrong conception of him. The humorist who laughed away the romantic absurdities of an outworn institution and laughed himself into the world's bosom is here degraded to a satirist afraid to attack his enemies openly. Han Ryner takes great pains to present his hero as primarily an enemy to the Church and religion; he never foregoes an opportunity to fire a broadside against both. He insists that Cervantes's real motive was to express under the allegorical Don Quixote his radical ideas of religion and his disgust with the Church and its priesthood. "Posterity," he makes Cervantes say, "will perhaps translate my ambiguous whistling into plain speech. . . . My Don Quixote will burst and unfold, strong as a tempest of thought. How helpless you will be before it, you monks, inquisitors, little great men of this earth, vile, sorry kings, deceitful pontiffs. . . . Catholicism has accumulated too many crimes not to perish some day, borne down by its infamous burdens! . . . "

"And Cervantes thought," says Ryner, "of the transformations of the religion of Jesus, through the tortuous, groping work of the centuries, through the greedy ambition-spurred efforts of priests."

Cervantes died a hypocrite, if we are to believe Ryner. "To ward off suspicions of heresy and infidelity," Ryner states, "he took the most infinitesmal precautions. He requested Mass to be said for his soul, and expressed the desire to be buried in the convent of the nuns of the Trinity, and in the garment of the Third Order."

The author's general disregard for accuracy is apparent in his accepting as facts what to scholars are only conjectures. One instance of this sort must suffice. Many different identifications of the Fernandez Avellaneda who wrote a continuation of part one of Don Quixote have been suggested. Although all are rejected because of insufficient evidence, Ryner selects that one, apparently, which suits best his particular purpose of vilifying the priesthood. He distorts the facts, moreover, for he makes the king's confessor, Luis de Aliaga, steal many chapters, together with the outline and notes, from Cervantes's manuscript, and publish them as his own.

Painful reading as this is for Catholics, we ought to be thankful that, despite the publisher's assertion—"there has not been available in English a competent biography of this world genius"—there is a very trustworthy biography by Rudolph Scheville, Professor of Spanish in the University of California. His book should be read as an antidote.

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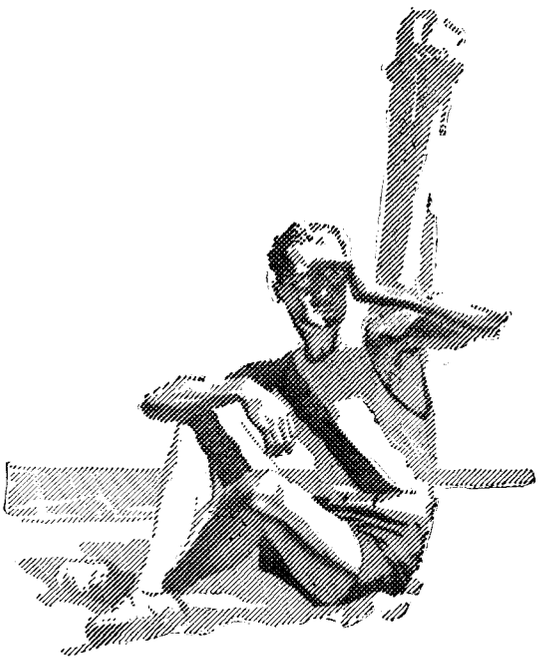

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Modern Painting: A Study of Tendencies, by Frank Jewett Mather, jr. New York: Henry Holt and Company. $6.50.

FROM Romanticism to Futurism, or just Romanticism, might cover Mr. Mather's thesis a shade more fully and aptly than the title Modern Painting. He begins his delightful survey with David at the salon of 1785 and ends it with Macdonald Wright and synchromism. Mr. Mather's is a well-orchestrated book whose counterpoint, as it were, is humanism. For he is of that small band of humanists in this country—like Mr. Brownell, Mr. More and Mr. Mumford—whose training, sound if sophisticated, lay in a more refined generation and whose outlook is conditioned rather more by whether a painting is beautiful (beautiful in the sense of, as Santayana puts it, "the honestum, the noble, excellent, admirable, and rightly constituted") than by whether a painting is erratic after the fashion of mad romantic genius. Philosophically, that is Mr. Mather's sole concern. His temperament is averse to what smacks of the coarse, the turbulent, the merely feelingful. At the same time the sugary and the coldly academic will find no priggish friend in him.

There is, on the whole, plain sailing for Mr. Mather's thesis. Romanticism was, it might be said, born in the Academy of Saint Luke, full of those worse-coördinated spirits who could not paint in the grand style that from 1666 had been imposed upon Frenchmen by their Roi Soleil and Colbert. This bureaucratic art of the Royal Academy stifled for over a century all subjects not drawn from classical antiquity or religion. The Gobelins factory and the Villa Medici in Rome were the apprentice shops of this classicism and those whose yearning took a different tack, with dilettantish or contemporary-life interests, became suspect, like Rubens, or as we say now, romanticists. The comparison may be made in a different way by drawing a distinction between the cold art of classicism and the warm art of its rival: Poussin versus Rubens.

Now all those who have felt at one time or another disturbed by the indelicate figures and the extremely stressful action in Rubens's canvases will be aroused when Mr. Mather calls their dislike of this beefy heartiness priggish. That may be so, but it is a cruel truth. Rubens lacked what Coventry Patmore said was the point of rest. Such reasonings of both camps can be controverted or modified; what cannot is that, above them all, Rubens was a great painter. He knew paint and was not afraid to use it for novel effects. His influence on modern painting is fundamental—he furthered French dilettantism so that it developed gracefully into Watteau, Fragonard, and the école galante. He handed down Venetian ideals of landscape and design, and he showed that with religious themes the subjects of genre (which had been typically Dutch, Flemish and Teutonic for centuries) could be treated not incongruously. The Le Nains and Chardin, almost alone of French painters before the nineteenth century, had turned to genre and still-life. With Delacroix and Cézanne, Rubens is the most considerable romanticist.

Mr. Mather in reaching impressionism (he first writes a brilliant chapter on landscape painting in which he overrates Corot and Millet, shrewdly, however, setting the latter apart from the romantics) says that the luminists or impressionists were weak on their reflective side and too strong in wishing to make of light "a shadowless glare." "The hardness and casualness of his [Manet's] vision," his "most remarkable still-lifes," his making sure of what he saw, are exceedingly good obiter dicta on that fine artist. Mr. Mather sees Seurat dotting in color "to its ultimate and self-defeating perfection." He finds expressionism, like impressionism, anti-intellectualistic. "Gefühl ist alles" is equally the romantic creed of Matisse as of Monet. Only post-impressionism (Seurat, Cézanne, and Gauguin) and cubism (Picasso, Gleizes, Metzinger, Bracque) were intellectualistic. What exhibitionisms were committed in Cézanne's name—the name which cherished structure more than anything else!

Mr. Mather is very sound, if not long, on modernist movements. When he is longer, as on Constable and on Courbet, who made "the earth look crumbly and absorbent," he is conspicuously good. And yet on Courbet he misses describing how the many-faceted vistas seen through a grove, etc., pour from the canvas a light intense as a diamond's underneath solar rays, so that the whole composition is set a-glimmering in yellow-green verdure.

Mr. Mather really feels that painting has come to a pretty bad pass: academies have ceased to be repositories of craft lore or creeds and now give only hanging space; direct education of the artist is dying out under democracy; nothing has flowered without discipline; but romanticists happily are tiring of their very selves. Meanwhile dealers and museums have increased in importance until in them lies the hope for guiding the taste and the civilization of future art.

A high court of some kind is necessary to discuss painting processes. But whatever synthesis the painting of tomorrow may make, it may at least learn much, and not vainly, from the immediateness of impressionism, the deep rhythmic gravity of post-impressionism, and the mathematical resoluteness of cubism. Otherwise, all painting might as well return to the old religious form of the renaissance. Those panels, Raphael's and Leonardo's, like the great figures in history, Alexander, Caesar and Napoleon, will always remain the standard of quality, and probably the best, if not the only, standard of it.

JAMES W. LANE, JR.

Among the Danes, by Edgar Wallace Knight. University of North Carolina Press. $2.00.

DR. KNIGHT'S excellent book on Denmark gives special attention to rural conditions, to the farm tenancies and government encouragement of small holdings. As professor of education in the University of North Carolina, Dr. Knight cannot write of the Danish conditions without a backward look at America, and his volume is full of suggestions valuable in our own problems of education among farming communities.

The success of Danish agrarian methods has had no lack of attention throughout the world and the late American minister to Copenhagen, Dr. Maurice Francis Egan, contributed very important writings and lectures for our American audiences. Dr. Knight found his studies leading him back directly to the folk high school system, which a number of the agricultural board in the Irish Free State is at present advocating for introduction among the Irish farmers. The incident relating to the controversies that have raged in Norway during the past two years over the removal of the director of the Voss folk high school, Lars Eskelande, on account of his conversion to the Catholic Church, have interested many of our readers in the character of these Norwegian institutes modeled upon the Danish folk high schools. Therefore, Dr. Knight's detailed accounts of these establishments among the Danes will be read with especial interest by our students.

"Show us how to make farming pay and how we may live happily and profitably on the farm," has been the demand of the Danish agriculturist:

"The folk high schools of Denmark," writes Dr. Knight, "are for all the people, the whole people, whether rich or poor,

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city or country. But they are generally attended almost entirely by the rural population. The close relation of these schools to farm life has undoubtedly deepened the sense of fellowship and common interests and interdependence of the farming classes." The classes are usually held during the winter months so as to interfere as little as possible with the work at home. Some twenty to sixty young men and women reside together under the watchful eye of a director and his wife, and the general absence of bookishness, joined to the serious aspect of both masters and pupils, the plain, democratic mode of life, and the communal interest in music, concerted singing and athletics, go far to explain the advance in culture and effectiveness which in a few years transforms the dweller of the most remote farmlands into an excellent, upstanding citizen and an alert and capable man of the world.

THOMAS WALSH.

To the Land of the Eagle, by Paul Edmonds. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $5.00.

IF YOU are about to start for Europe and wish to avoid the ignominy of being a "tourist," this may be just in time to save you. Paul Edmonds, author of To the Land of the Eagle, defines a tourist as one who travels for amusement, follows the beaten path, considers comfort essential, and is preoccupied with scenery, cathedrals, museums and picture galleries. A traveler, on the other hand, is one who travels because of some urge within him which cannot be resisted, disregards comfort entirely, avoids the beaten track, and is more interested in men than in scenery, considering the physical characteristics of a country as they affect the mentality of the people, and their works of art and architecture in relation to their development and character. To be sure, you may still prefer the comparative comfort of hotels and char-a-bancs and even a little help, perhaps, from the omnipresent Thomas Cook or American Express; such a preference, though deplorable, is conceivable.

Nevertheless, when excursion is to be made vicariously there is no reason to be a stickler for comfort, and one may as well enjoy the ardors of a real traveler. Such undeniably is Mr. Edmonds. He also has the ability to tell of places in such a way that the reader both feels that he has been there and wishes to go. "The land of the eagle" is the land of the mountainous Balkan countries, and Mr. Edmonds traverses it very thoroughly, for the most part by slow means of locomotion permitting a really intimate contact with the country and its people. He has an unjaded appetite for all he sees and hears, jotting it down in a familiar, chatty style only occasionally interspersed with statistical paragraphs that smell of the guide-book. His drawings add greatly to his story. Some of the sketches of mountains and towns have the quality of wood-block prints, and more of them should have been granted paper free of print on both sides. The drawings of the Albanians and Montenegrins give an amusing idea of these peoples, their costumes, and their foibles, which the unassisted written word might never have achieved.

Politics and economics are thrown in, a little helter-skelter. The author may regret that the present American immigration laws cause countless Balkan men to sit about at home with nothing to do except to play backgammon, but the idea does not detain him long. He has a knack of picking up amusing tidbits, such as that about the Albanian translation of the Bible, in which "Blessed are the poor in spirit" became "Blessed are the weak-minded." We may close as we began with the difference between a tourist and a traveler. What tourist could view with equanimity this experience of a Kortezan night?

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"I had a most uncomfortable night in a bedroom with three beds, of which two were occupied by Albanians who slept in their clothes and snored. The third bed I shared with a host of predatory creatures who seemed to have been fasting for months in anticipation of my arrival. At five the next morning, when I had sunken from sheer exhaustion into a fitful slumber, I was aroused by the other two men getting up, and saw my late antagonists slowly climbing the wall. . . ."

GLADYS GRAHAM.

The Cambridge Book of Lesser Poets, compiled by J. C. Squire. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.75.

ANTHOLOGISTS are now so countless and well-established that they have started a little class-war between themselves and the poets. Without venturing upon the battlefield, one may say that the chief purpose of a compiler, quite apart from the recording of his personal satisfactions and the drawing of royalties, is to rescue from oblivion beauties which time or the flood of competition have engulfed. He is something like a beneficent steward rescuing precious rolls of manuscript from the John Stuart Mill type of maid. This being so, Mr. Squire's new collection has a two-fold merit. It enshrines the best of the lesser English poets, and for the most part it is concerned with verse written prior to the nineteenth century. The compiler "began by omitting one hundred poets, including all the established Americans from Emerson and Lowell to Moody and Tabb, neither of whom is known in this country as he should be." This notation (which there was really no good reason for restricting to England) is a welcome addition to the volume.

Richard Rolle's admirable Love Is Life opens the collection, and Lionel Johnson brooding By the Statue of King Charles at Charing Cross all but closes it. In between Mr. Squire has sandwiched hundreds of lyrics, with the obvious intent of being just to the varying moods which historically have governed the writing of poetry. There is a generous sprinkling of songs, ranging from anonymous old love ditties to Toplady's Rock of Ages. English fondness for moralizing is amply noted, and many epigrams are included. Of these last, Lord Erskine's comparatively little-known comment on Scott's Field of Waterloo is a fair sample:

> On Waterloo's ensanguined plain
> Lie tens of thousands of the slain;
> But none, by sabre or by shot,
> Fell half so flat as Walter Scott.

Mr. Squire's headliners are Nicholas Breton, Charles Sackville and John Clare. One is perhaps more grateful for numerous isolated lyrics, particularly the charming anonymous "Adam lay ibounden," Atterbury's Written on a White Fan, William Cory's exquisite Heraclitus, and George Macdonald's Dorcas. There is a generous sprinkling of Catholic lyrics, and a rather frugal consciousness of the Irish poets. The heart of the American accession is a group of lyrics by Herman Melville, which are most interesting and even relatively genuine. One cannot but feel, however, that in this case Mr. Squire allowed one of the most outstanding of American literary names to get the better of his poetic judgment. Certainly no United States editor would feel able to restrict the field to such a narrow point. Yet even here the editing is intelligent; and looking at the book as a whole, one is inclined to believe that this new anthology has in all likelihood come to stay.

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

CURRENT MAGAZINES

Studies, the quarterly review so long associated with the Irish province of the Society of Jesus, more than maintains in its current issue the high standard of scholarship and incisive comment to which we have become used. An article by John Kelleher, Profiteering as a Legal and Moral Problem, is largely a review of Father Arnou's well-known monograph on the Just Price. Mr. Kelleher significantly regrets that "the ineffectiveness of Father Arnou's moral suggestions is to be found in his too ready acceptance of the existing economic conditions." Dr. William O'Kelly examines the prognosis of consumption with rather depressing conclusions. Concerning the much-advertised Spahlinger "cure," he reasonably asks why it is not submitted to the tests that so eminent a pioneer as Pasteur readily consented to undergo. Father Thurston's Valhalla of the Spiritualists is a witty and destructive article on the "messages" which Sir Arthur Conan Doyle claims to have received and which paint a vapid paradise, made, according to all internal evidence, at Hollywood. Eoin MacNeill's Ireland and Wales in the History of Jurisprudence is a careful study of a little-known period. One of the best and most luminous articles in Studies is Father Aubrey Gwynn's review of Rostovtzeff's Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire. Full light has never been thrown upon the dying end of the imperial pageant, but agreeing that "there is no getting away from the extraordinary sense of physical exhaustion which characterizes the life of the later Roman empire," Father Gwynn finds the safest clue along two facts. First, the peasant, the "paganus," was never taken fully into the political life of the empire. Secondly, the responsibility for requisitions made by the central authority on the "decurio" or "curialis," who represented local government, became so exorbitant and the punishments for non-performance were so drastic, that leading citizens in the provinces were apt to take to their heels when appointed to office. Among books noticed by Studies we are glad to see a particularly understanding review of the life of our own Dr. Gilmary Shea.

Pax contains in its summer number an important paper (signed simply A Carthusian Monk) dealing with the Great Chartreuse, the ancient monastery situated between Chambery and Grenoble and dating from the foundation of Saint Bruno and his companions. The author gives an interesting account of a peculiar plant of the region about the monastery known as "the lily of Saint Bruno." Dom Theodore Baily contributes an able paper, Images and Image-Making, and Provence's tradition of Saint Mary Magdalen is discussed by Ymal Oswin.

The Catholic World for August is of exceptional excellence in its contents. Jules Bois treats, under that title, of the spiritual tragedy in France; H. B. L. Hughes writes interestingly of the young Italian, Giosuè Borsi, shot down in battle on November 10, 1915; and J. M. Stuart-Young tells of his friendship with Francis Thompson. Eleanor Rogers Cox contributes one of her splendid poems, O Ice-Cold Loveliness of Winter Waters, to help sustain the high general average.

Blackfriars for August has a paper in which Father Vincent McNabb brings forth in Anglican witness to Saint Peter an array of English authorities—Bishop Lightfoot of Durham, Fenton John A. Hort, D.D., Bishop Westcott and Bishop Headlam of Gloucester. Barbara Barclay Carter presents the political theory of Don Sturzo, and John Gray writes an eloquent essay on the literary suggestions of cider.

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THE QUIET CORNER

"I counsel thee, shut not thy heart nor thy library."—C. LAMB.

The heavy summer rains beating against the library window found Angelicus wrapped in his heavy Doctor's cloak, with two new books before him: they were The Physiology of Taste, by J. A. Brillat-Savarin (New York: Boni and Liveright) and Bouquet by G. B. Stern (New York: A. A. Knopf). While Miss Angelica, Hereticus and Britannicus were making up a hearth-fire of disused manuscripts and newspapers, the Doctor seized upon an opportunity for a discourse.

"At last the first complete edition in English of dear old Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin's classic work, The Physiology of Taste, coming to us when the gustatory sense of our American public is at the lowest ebb in its entire history! 'An animal swallows its food; man eats it, but only the man of intellect knows how to dine,' declared this clever old bachelor, who, after his years as a French teacher and violinist in New York, returned to France where he became a provincial magistrate and author of legal pamphlets, and ended up as the familiar at Madame Récamier's table. In the statement 'tell me what a man eats and I will tell you the kind of man he is,' he presents an appalling problem to our public, who know little of food besides coffee and griddle-cakes, doughnuts, and pie with ice cream. Since the lamentable Volstead Act we have noted the disappearance of practically all of our New York restaurants where any intelligence was shown in the kitchen beyond a resolve to dodge all unnecessary expense and all labor with the dishes; so that a study of the cartes du jour in an expensive New York hotel or at a railway restaurant reveal practically the same list of canned soups more or less disguised under fantastic names, the same salads with or without the household dressings, the same beef, fish, sausage and pork cooked in the self-same way with conventionalized Hollandaise or Italianized cheese. The finer things are proclaimed in sensational print: a live lobster will be broiled for you only if you are a member of the United States Senate; a common alligator pear, five cents per dozen in the southern lands, will be apprized at sixty and seventy-five cents apiece at the hands of such recent caterers as have heard of the fruitage. To the foreign chefs, the Greeks and Italians who have fastened upon our restaurants with a greedy avariciousness that is pitiless as any bloodthirst, we must go for the abominable red and black caviars, the shredded fish that masquerades as crab meat, the manufactured scallops.

" 'So long as it is hot,' says Mr. Frank Crowninshield in his Foreword, 'and ready to serve, they will swallow it (quickly, of course) leave the restaurant—their coffee half drunk [usually adominable liquid that would degrade the live stock on any ranch] their dessert untasted [we can hardly imagine what Mr. Crowninshield is thinking of: ice cream, pie, canned peaches, bottled figs, rice pudding or French pastry of a structure too terrible for decent words]—without looking at their bill and without a suggestion of compliment or complaint.'

"Old Brillat-Savarin assumes an easy professional air, with his tongue in his cheek and his eye for the prandial opportunity. His meditations are concerned with the senses of sight, hearing, smell, taste or savor, and touch. He proceeds from a consideration of the gustatory sense to gastronomy, gourmandise, digestion, sleep, corpulence and leanness, the history of cooking and varieties of food preferences. He gives us, in fact, a true philosophy of the table and we fail to be depressed by the note which tells us of his indifference to wines except as digestive elements. To him, as to Grimod de la Reyniere

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and the Marquis de Cussy, the food was more important than the sauce. We, alas, have reached an epoch where the sauce is necessarily the prime factor to disguise the deficiencies of the meat, the fish and the pastries. 'Eheu, fugaces, Posthume, Posthume, labuntur anni.'

"From Brillat-Savarin it is a great rachitic jump to the gustatory motor trip through France undertaken in Bouquet by Miss G. B. Stern and her motor friends in search of vinous excitement. The diffidence with which this London literary woman writes 'in praise of wine' rapidly disappears under the genial influence of vintages red, white, sweet and dry: we share with her in the numerous thrills of her experiments from one end of France to the other, but we look in vain for anything like the artistic inspiration that is sometimes nurtured on these potations, and we come finally to a positive resentment against the rapidity of that splendid Fiat which was so laboriously named the Flotsam, and against the inarticulate stupidity of her drinking mates and chauffeur.

"What she knows regarding the vintages of France may be practical, but for her readers there is little more information than that she enjoyed this wine and didn't care for that. To sit beside the animal-trough at Vouvray and imbibe the strong white wine, which was no novelty to many New Yorkers, might surely have suggested some reference to the gout which it is said to promote so promptly. The beautiful listing of old names of vintages that have history might have caused some suspension in the cylinders, to enable us to hear accounts of their origins and best methods of service. There is altogether too much of smart cafeteria jargon and—shades of Brillat-Savarin, Marquis of Hertford, Ward McAllister!—not enough time to taste, appreciate, digest or even enjoy a dinner! Heaven preserve us from ever encountering in France or elsewhere a crowd of such barbarians on a wine-hunting motor trip! We have heard stories of Cuba and our native sons' exhilarations there: it seems that America is not the lonely possessor of all the wild men and women who chance to be afloat in the present generation."

—The Librarian.

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